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LETTER

OF

SAMUEL CARUTHERS

TO HIS CONSTITUENTS,

EXPLAINING HIS PAST ACTION, DEFINING HIS PRESENT
POSITION, AND THE POSITION OF PARTIES.

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E431

C32

LETTER.

TO MY CONSTITUENTS: During my short congressional career I have never before had occasion to especially address you by letter. I have hitherto been content to rest upon the reasons for my action, declared on the floor of the House, or stand silently upon the record I had made by my votes.

The reasons for doing so now arise from the breaking down of the old wall which divided parties—the new elements which have been mingled into our national politics—the alarming *isms* now distinctly formed in the country—the peril that threatens the very existence of our institutions, and that solemn duty which rests upon every Representative who would deal fairly with his people, to declare, frankly, his present positions and his future intentions. I should be unworthy of the high trusts you have confided to my keeping—unworthy of the kindness and confidence you have so generously lavished upon me—unworthy of my native State—unworthy of the regard of good men, if I should shrink from the performance of this duty now.

We have had a most exciting and protracted struggle in the organization of the House. I have voted uniformly for the Democratic nominees for the speakership. For this I am charged with the betrayal of the Whig party, and with an abandonment of the principles upon which I was elected. And who is it that makes these charges? Is it the old-line Whigs? I have not heard of an old-line Whig, either in my district or elsewhere, who does not indorse my course. These charges are made by the Know Nothing press of my State, and by anonymous Know Nothing scribblers, the latter of whom, never having had an honest motive themselves, have no conception of the thing in others. *They charge me with betraying the Whig party! They who decoyed it into their councils, and assassinated it in the dark—they who come forth from their conclaves, with their hands dripping with its blood—they who met at Philadelphia in convention, and vauntingly proclaimed its death—with a pharisaical affectation of party, declare that they are not “responsible for its obnoxious acts and violated pledges;” that it has “elevated sectional hostility into a positive element of political power, and brought our institutions into*

peril." Yes, while I stand a mourner at the grave of the Whig party, *they* are rejoicing at its death and calumniating its life! Yet these men have the unblushing hardihood to *twit me* with abandonment of that once noble party! Was ever impudence more gigantic and more absurd?

But it is sometimes softly and gently whispered that the American party is the Whig party in disguise. If this is so, they have solemnly declared a *lie* in their conventions, and it is a *cheat* and a *fraud* upon the Democrats in the order. So *they have either abandoned their party*, and have no right to abuse me, or are engaged in a fraud which makes *their abuse* a *compliment*. I tell these gentlemen that they have *slain my first love*, and left me a *political widower*; and I have a perfect right to marry another party if I see proper!

I am charged with having abandoned the principles upon which I was elected. Does not every man in my district know that the Kansas-Nebraska question was the controlling issue in my last canvass? Does not every man know that it was my position on this issue that gave me my large majority in a Democratic district? Does not every man know that I obtained as many Democratic votes as I did Whig votes? Does not every man know that I declared my principles, in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives, on the 7th of April, 1854? To stop the mouths of my accusers I will give an extract from that speech. I said then, speaking of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, that—

"I will not pause long to dwell upon its party effect; for, in my judgment, the questions involved override all party considerations. It is true, this bill is presented to us as an Administration measure. It is true that I am here as a Whig; but I am not here to give this Administration a factious opposition. I am not here to oppose any measure brought forward by it, merely because it is brought forward by it. I am here, uncommitted to a blind opposition or a blind support, to follow to the end the dictates of my own judgment and conscience, and the will of those who sent me.

"In this instance I believe the Administration has taken high national ground; that it has planted itself upon a great American principle—the principle of self-government; a principle involved in none of our party issues; a principle dearer than any party considerations; a principle upon which all sound, national men of all parties may meet and stand, as upon ground alike cherished and alike dear. It was this principle ingrafted in the compromises of 1850, that commended them so warmly to the American heart; it was this principle which was ratified by both parties in their conventions at Baltimore, and it is for this principle I speak to-day.

"Sir, this is no war between the Administration and its opponents—no war between Whigs and Democrats as such; but, disguise it as you may, *it is a war between Free-Soilism on the one hand, and the right of the people to self-government on the other.*"

Upon these declarations I went into the canvass. I was elected then, declaring that the principles of the Kansas-Nebraska bill "*were dearer than any party considerations*"—"a principle upon which all good men of all parties might meet and stand, as upon ground alike cherished and alike dear;" that they "*overrode all party considerations.*" Being thus elected, when I came to cast my first vote for Speaker, I found that neither the "South



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subject of slavery”—that his “*political existence commenced since that flood*”!! I will comment no further on this letter!

Mr. FULLER became a candidate for Canal Commissioner, and, while a candidate, made speeches—among others one in Alleghany City, reported in the *Pittsburg Gazette*, then a Whig paper, and then supporting Mr. FULLER. In that speech, published at the time, and uncontradicted, Mr. FULLER says:

“Let the people of the South talk as they please, *slavery was a dark and damning stain upon their escutcheon.*” * * * “Let us say to the proud waves of slavery, as they beat against the barriers of freedom, ‘Thus far shalt thou go, and no further.’ Let us give our lands free, in every sense of the word, to our citizens, and to the *poor and oppressed of other nations.*” * * * “As lords of freedom, we had a duty to perform to the South. Let us do it with a proper regard to our friends there, but let us **INSIST ON THE EARLIEST PRACTICAL ABOLITION OF SLAVERY**”!!!

Ay, “**THE EARLIEST PRACTICAL ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.**” Look at it! For “*free soil*”—“opposed to the extension of slavery”—in favor of its “*earliest practical abolition*”—intriguing for the nomination of a Free-Soil convention; and in addition to all this, when the final vote for Speaker came—the last vote—the vote which “tried the souls of men”—the vote which was to determine whether BANKS, the political Abolitionist—the Black Republican—the northern Know Nothing—the “Union-sliding”—the “absorption” BANKS, should be elected Speaker of the American House of Representatives, or that accomplished gentleman and sound, national, and conservative man, Governor WILLIAM AIKEN—he, under the flimsy and miserable pretext of having paired off with a man who was present, being present himself, *dodged*, and did not vote at all!

And now with his record fairly before you—elected upon the principles on which I was elected—I submit it to your candor, if I would not have exposed myself to the just *scorn and contempt* of every good man of my district, of *any party*, if I had voted for *Henry M. Fuller*? I voted for William A. Richardson, of Illinois. I *knew him*. I had served with him in the last Congress. I knew him to be the very soul of honor. A man whose “word was as good as his bond;” a man whose large heart could take all the Union into its affections; a man who was all seamed with scars received in battles for the rights of the South; a man who had been passed around by the Abolitionists, (within black lines,) in what they call their “roll of infamy,” because of his gallant bearing in those battles; a man who has stood unmoved while mad fanaticism poured its vials of wrath upon his head; a man who breasted the storm in “its wildest ragings” after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill; the man who bid them a proud and bold defiance; the statesman who was our champion and leader through all the great struggle upon that bill; the statesman who had counseled his friends in the North to “stand and brave the fire without flinching;” the man who, full of courage and patriotism, dares to do whatever his large heart approves and his comprehensive mind suggests; and a man, too, who is of the West, western—*who is of us and with us*. I would not, I should not, I could not, I did not hesitate for a moment which to choose—this man, or *Henry M. Fuller*. **WAS I NOT RIGHT?**

I had seen Judge Douglas, of Illinois, after anxious deliberation, introduce that bill, and stake his political life upon the justice of its principles. I had seen the Administration commit its fortunes to it; I had seen the great body

of the national Whigs in the Senate, in the House, in the country, come up to its support ; I had seen the Democracy adopt it as an *article in their creed of faith* ; I had seen the people of my district, as almost one man, indorse the principles of that bill ; and *was I* to desert the gallant ship, with her tried and trusted crew, as she plowed her majestic way, unmoved by the storm and unshaken by the billows, to go out in a miserable yawl, under the command of such a "straggler" of a captain—such a "Latter-Day Saint" as this *Henry M. Fuller* ?

But, it is said that Mr. Fuller is a *Know Nothing*, and therefore I should have given him my vote. The contest for the speakership developed the fact that there are now three parties in the country. The northern Know Nothing and Abolition party, *fused* under the name of Black Republican, the (so-called) "National Americans," and the Democratic party. This Know Nothing party was born amidst the factitious excitement manufactured by Abolitionists and disunionists out of the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. It sprung at once, "like Minerva from the brain of Jove," full armed, and entered the political arena. In the morning of its existence, it was full of promise. It declared that it would say to the angry waves, "*peace—be still!*" that it was the *only broad, national, conservative party* ; that its *great, paramount mission* was to save the Union, which was imperiled by agitation. Relying upon these promises, confiding in these assurances, many good men everywhere—many in my district—went into this organization. I went *twice* (and but twice) into their councils. I "*saw SAM.*" It took two visits to see him all over. I made them ; I saw *enough*, and determined to never look on his face again !

In dealing frankly with you, it is due that I should make this acknowledgment. I would not have the vote of an anti-Know Nothing in my district without his knowledge that I had been in their councils ; nor would I have the vote of a Know Nothing without his knowing that I am not of his order. I may prove wanting in *ability* to serve ; I shall never prove wanting in *candor towards you*. It has been the habit of my life to defend my course against all odds when I believe it is right, and to acknowledge my errors when I believe I have done wrong. I freely admit to you, that I ought never to have gone into a secret political society of any kind whatever ; that they are wrong in principle, against the very genius of our institutions, dangerous in practice, and should be avoided by all men, of all parties. I *objected then*, and *object now*, to the whole machinery of its organization ; I objected then, and object now, to an *indiscriminate proscription of naturalized citizens* from office ; I *objected then*, and *object now*, to anything that even *looks like* making a religious test. A Protestant by birth, a Protestant by education, by prejudice, by reason, by faith ; a Protestant in all, (I regret to say *except the practice*,) was a Catholic organization formed, to brand me as unworthy of public trust because of my religious opinions, I would call upon every honest Catholic in the land to aid me in striking it down. As I would "*have them do unto me, I will do unto them.*"

The Catholic and Protestant have fought side by side on those battle-fields where our liberties were won ; and when "pestilence has stalked at noon-day" through our cities, leaving a track of desolation and death, we have seen the Protestant and the Catholic ministry again laboring side by side to stay its

awful ravages—to administer balm to the sick, consolation to the dying, and decent interment to the dead! If we kneel not at the same altars, under the same forms, we worship the same God; we are pointed to the same accountability for sin, and to the same Heaven as a reward for piety! Why should not we leave controverted points of theology to the ministry of the churches? Why should not we *laymen* go on—as we should go on—in brotherly love and confidence? As I have opposed the dragging of politics *up* into the pulpit, I oppose drawing religion *down* into politics. All thinking men agree that the only real danger to our institutions arises from making the subject of slavery a sectional question. May I not respectfully ask the Protestant ministry of the South to pause and reflect, that if they bring the doings of churches into political discussion, they might injure Protestantism? May not the Catholic turn upon you with the fact, that of three thousand preachers who denounced the judgments of God upon our devoted heads who voted for the Kansas-Nebraska bill, there was not upon the paper the name of a single Catholic minister? May he not show that none of *his* clergymen are in the Halls of Congress, while *we* have *twenty odd preachers*? May he not show that *he* has never refused to take the “holy communion” with a slaveholder—that *his* church in the North are not stirring the waters of sectional strife—that they never do, and never have, interfered with the delicate question of slavery? and by showing these things, drawing these contrasts, may they not commend their church to the South, and weaken yours? These are questions for you to consider. It is but just to a large and respectable Protestant denomination—I allude to the regular old Baptists—to say that they have never, anywhere, at any time, under any circumstances, either North or South, interfered in political affairs.

Why should Protestants agitate this subject? Why should they endeavor to build up a *political party* upon a subject on which they can have no *political action*? You are forbidden to *act* by the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution says, that “Congress shall *make no law* respecting the establishment of religion, or *prohibiting the free exercise thereof*.” Take this case: Suppose a President, having sworn in Know Nothing councils that he will appoint no Roman Catholic to office, is elected. *He takes an oath to support the Constitution of the United States*. That Constitution says, that “*no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States*.” Suppose, then, a man is presented for office: does he not have to inquire, *under his first oath*, if the man is a Catholic? If he is, then he must *refuse him on that account*. If he does so refuse him, he *violates his last oath*, because he then swore he would make “*no religious test*.” Is comment necessary?

But I have been asked if I would vote for a man who owes *temporal* allegiance to a foreign Power? I answer, no. I would not vote for any man, of any religion, for any office, who is bound by such an allegiance.

As to a *spiritual allegiance*, my understanding is that we all owe that allegiance to a Power whose Throne is outside of the United States—to God, in HEAVEN!

But in all these views, perhaps, no Catholic or Protestant disagrees with me, and I will not elaborate them further.

I stated to you, that the great reason for my having ever gone into a coun-

cil was, I was assured that the preservation of the Union was the "rock on which they built their church"—that men who joined in the North, as well as the South, made a "burnt offering" of their prejudices, and joined *with hands locked in hands in a living chain around the Constitution, in a common brotherhood, and in a common defense*. I was told, too, that I could withdraw if I was not pleased.

I ask every Know Nothing who reads this, if such was not his understanding of the objects of the American order? Then I ask them to lay aside their partialities and prejudices, and, thinkingly as patriots, to look back at its history.

It met in Convention at Philadelphia in June last—it laid down a platform—it put forth the celebrated twelfth section. Here it is:

"*Resolved*, That the American party, having risen upon the ruins, and in spite of the opposition, of the Whig and Democratic parties, cannot be held in any manner responsible for the obnoxious acts or violated pledges of either; that the systematic agitation of the slavery question by those parties has elevated sectional hostility into a positive element of political power, and brought our institutions into peril; it has, therefore, become the imperative duty of the American party to interpose for the purpose of giving peace to the country and perpetuity to the Union; that, as experience has shown it impossible to reconcile opinions so extreme as those that separate the disputants, and as there can be no dishonor in submitting to the laws, the National Council has deemed it the best guarantee of common justice and future peace to abide by and maintain the existing laws upon the subject of slavery as a final and conclusive settlement of that subject, in spirit and in substance.

"And regarding it the highest duty to avow their opinions upon a subject so important in distinct and unequivocal terms, it is hereby declared, as the sense of this National Council, that Congress possesses no power, under the Constitution, to legislate upon the subject of slavery in the States where it does or may exist, or to exclude any State from admission into the Union, because its constitution does or does not recognize the institution of slavery as a part of its social system; and expressly premitting any expression of opinion upon the power of Congress to establish or prohibit slavery in any Territory, it is the sense of the National Council that Congress ought not to legislate upon the subject of slavery within the Territories of the United States, and that any interference by Congress with slavery as it exists in the District of Columbia, would be a violation of the spirit and intention of the compact by which the State of Maryland ceded the District to the United States, and a breach of the national faith."

There is a platform on the subject of slavery (with the exception of a little *pretermittin'*) sound—one upon which the South could stand. They were conservative and just; but what did the *northern* and the *largest portion* of this so *eminently national party* do? *They repudiated this section; they spit upon it; they met together in their State councils*, and there these *conservative Union savers* were not satisfied with a simple repudiation of this twelfth section, but go on to announce doctrines as the doctrines of the party, which, if carried out, leads, in the strong language of Mr. Clay, (when speaking of refusing to admit a State because of a constitution tolerating slavery,) "*to a DISSOLUTION OF THE UNION THROUGH A BLOODY AND PERILOUS ROAD.*"

I give you a resolution passed by a Know Nothing convention at Cincinnati in November last, composed of delegates from *seven* of the northern and northwestern States. They declare—

"That the repeal of the Missouri compromise was an infraction of the plighted faith of the

nation, and that it should be restored; and if efforts to that end should fail, Congress should refuse to admit into the Union any State tolerating slavery which shall be formed out of any portion of the territory from which that institution was excluded by that compromise."

Yes, they will not admit Kansas if she applies for admission as a slave State; thus, according to the language of Mr. Clay, and thus, as every intelligent man knows, leading to the "*dissolution of the Union by a bloody road.*" You see by this resolution how the Know Nothings in the northwestern States stand. I will show you how they stand in the middle States. In the Legislature of Pennsylvania, the Know Nothings and the Black Republicans, true to their *instincts* and *actions*, FUSED, and they declared, on the 12th day of January, 1856, in the following form, to wit:

"Resolved, That we are opposed to the admission of any more slave States into this Union: therefore,

"Resolved, That Kansas and Nebraska should only be ADMITTED into the sisterhood as FREE STATES."

"*Opposed to the admission of any more slave States into this Union:*" the rankest and the most damnable Free-Soilism, as well as the most direct road to dissolution!

In New York—in the *Empire State*—the State which owes its greatness to the commerce of the Union as it is—in that State, so bound to us and so dependent upon us by commercial ties, the Know Nothings met there in State convention, at Binghampton, and they, too, join in the swelling chorus of Abolitionism, and resolve as follows:

"Resolved, That the national Administration, by its general course of official conduct, together with an attempt to destroy the repose, harmony, and fraternal relations of the country in the repeal of the Missouri compromise, and the encouragement of aggressions upon the government of the territorial inhabitants of Kansas, deserves and should receive the united condemnation of the American people, and that the institution of slavery should receive NO EXTENSION from such repeal."

The meaning of which is, that Kansas, if applying as a slave State, should be rejected. This is the platform upon which they went into their last fight! This is the platform upon which they gained their victory! A victory which has been so much rejoiced over! A victory which would lead to a dissolution of the Union! Thus stand the Know Nothings of New York! Let us go to the northeastern—the New England States. Maine, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, all declare that—

"Whereas the aggressive policy which has been uniformly pursued by the slave power, from the commencement of our national existence down to the abrogation of the Missouri compact, evinces a determination 'to crush out' the spirit as well as the forms of liberty from among us, and to subject the free States to a relentless despotism; and whereas the success of the southern delegates to the National Council recently held in Philadelphia, in making abject and uncomplaining submission to pro-slavery legislation a fundamental article in the creed of the national American party, renders it imperative on us to express our views upon the great question of the country and the age: Therefore, we declare

"That the great barrier to slavery, ruthlessly broken by the repeal of the Missouri prohibition, ought to be speedily restored; and that, in any event, no State created from any part of the territory covered by that compromise ought ever to be admitted into the Union as a slave State!"

Though I have them at hand, I will not weary and disgust you with any more of these northern Know Nothing platforms. I have taken the north-west, the center, and the northeast. I have shown you, so that no honest man will ever deny it who reads these platforms, that they have gone, utterly gone, into practical Abolitionism; that no Representative—no man who values the rights of the South—can act with them.

Do you want more proof? I refer you to the record of the present Congress. I assert to you that three fourths of the men who elected BANKS were Know Nothings. I assert to you that not a single northern member of that party voted for Governor AIKEN for Speaker! That after all their "loud-mouthed" professions of nationality, FULLER dodged; his precious little band of six threw away their votes upon their immortal leader, and thus allowed BANKS, who was only elected by three votes—who would sink the Union—who would "absorb" with the negroes—who has not yet determined whether he is better than a negro or not—yes, these northern Know Nothings threw away their votes, and allowed this man BANKS to be elected Speaker!

Will any man of common decency—will any man in Missouri, of ordinary self-respect, ever again abuse me for not having acted with the northern FULLER party?

Instead of getting national Know Nothings from the North for our national man, (Governor Aiken,) we really lost two "South Americans"—Mr. Cullen, of Delaware, and Mr. Henry Winter Davis, from Maryland! So you will see that, instead of the tendencies of the American order being to liberalize the North, its practical operation is to Free-Soilize the South!

Do you want more proof? I will give it. The Know Nothing convention, held at Philadelphia on the 22nd of February, 1856, (the birthday of Washington—what a desecration!) repudiate and abolish this twelfth section, on a separate and distinct vote, and by an overwhelming majority; and in its stead place a plank which means all things to all men, and of which a member of the convention, from Indiana, and a supporter of it, (Mr. Sheets,) said in that convention—

"He would assure the South that the twelfth section must be got rid of. He was willing to accept a compromise, but the section must be got rid of; he was willing to accept the Washington platform; for, if there was anything in it, it was so covered up with verbiage that a President would be elected before the people would find out what it was all about. (Tumultuous laughter.)

Yes, this infamous sentiment, instead of being received with patriotic indignation, was received with "tumultuous laughter!" and the "Washington platform," presented by one Parson French S. Evans—the defeated Black Republican candidate for Sergeant-at-Arms of the present House—was adopted by that convention!

Do you want more proof? I think every intelligent, honest man in my district, who is not an aspirant for office, will exclaim—"Hold, enough!" But for the benefit of the Know Nothing aspirants for my place in the district, I will give two more facts. That the northern portion of that convention telegraph to the Black Republican Pittsburg convention, sitting at the same time, that the—

"American party is no longer united. Raise the Republican banner. LET THERE BE

NO FURTHER EXTENSION OF SLAVERY. THE AMERICANS ARE WITH YOU."

And the still further significant fact, that after the express repudiation of the twelfth section, they denounce in their platform the repeal of the Missouri compromise line.

And now—I do not ask the aspirants for my place—I do not ask those who want to go as Know Nothings to the Legislature—those who want to be sheriffs, county judges, squires, or constables, &c.—but I ask the true men of my district—the real people, where I have always found my friends—the men who have no object but the good of their country at heart, to do as I have done—abandon this organization!—if it has not failed—utterly, completely, entirely failed, as a sound, national, conservative party?—if every intelligent man does not know that it has so failed?—and if every honest man will not acknowledge the fact?

As to the great catch-words, "Americans shall rule America!"—I am in favor of Americans ruling America. They do, they always have, and they always will rule America.

But who are Americans? Your laws declare that, when a man has been here five years—when he will, under oath, renounce all allegiance to any foreign prince, potentate, or Power—when he will prove that he is of good moral character—attached to the institutions of the United States—he may be declared an American, and your law makes him a citizen. It is a fraud upon him, if you do not give him all the rights of citizenship!

Think of it! The poor old Pope of Rome, unable even to defend his life—to protect himself—has his throne supported and upheld by French bayonets! We have twelve native to one foreign vote in the United States! Why should we fear the Pope? And cannot twelve Americans manage one Irishman? In the Congress of the United States there is but one foreigner! In the last Legislature of our State—elected, as the members were, before the Know Nothing flood—there was but one; and he was a leading—I might say, without being invidious, the leading member of the Senate! I allude to Colonel C. Zeigler, who came, or was brought to this country when an infant eighteen months old! He is one of the first intellects of our State, or any State. He has been my political friend—my personal friend—my supporter in every aspiration. I submit it to you, if there is not something radically wrong in an organization which would prohibit me from voting for him, merely because he was born outside of the United States, though brought here when a mere child! I have used his name without his authority. I know he will pardon me, when he sees that I have only used it to illustrate more strongly to our people, than I could by a hundred arguments, the absurdity of this indiscriminate proscription of foreign-born men from office.

If the despotisms of the Old World should ever attempt to destroy our Government by sending their population here, I will not, as your Representative, pause to talk or argue about our naturalization laws. I shall speak and vote for prohibiting any foreigner from treading his foot upon our soil! I shall strike at the root—not waste my time and energies in lopping off the branches.

I have always understood that three grand leading ideas run through our institutions, giving them all of their vitality, their beauty, and their power.

First, that the people are capable of self-government. This is the doctrine of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. Second, that we had made an asylum to which the oppressed of every land might come as a refuge; that here they might worship as equals at the altar of our liberty; that here they might lift up their hearts to their God, according to the dictates of their consciences, and there should be none to molest them. Third, that there should be no aristocracy of birth. I have regarded, and do regard, these as the peculiar pride and boast of my country. I regard them as the three grand and massive pillars upon which the whole magnificent structure of our Government rests. I will not, by any action of mine, deface or mar these pillars.

I have been often asked if I am not in favor of reorganizing the Whig party? I answer that, in the present condition of parties and the country, in my judgment, such an effort can do no good, and might do great harm.

I say to you, that we have no sound material North out of which to reconstruct that party. Look back at the past. Every Whig Representative from the North, in 1849, voted for the Wilmot proviso. But three of them out of seventy-three voted for the fugitive slave law—that law which does but common justice to the South, and which is commanded by the Constitution itself! Not one Whig north of Mason and Dixon's line voted for the Kansas-Nebraska bill of 1854! On all these measures a majority of the northern Democrats voted with the South. Have we, then, not reached that point, in the North, presupposed by Mr. Clay when he said, "If the Whig party ever becomes merged into a contemptible Abolition party, I will abandon it in disgust?" and should not we, his old followers, take his implied counsel and his proposed example, when he says, "I will act with that party, whatever its name may be, that stands by the Constitution and the Union?" To endeavor now to reorganize the Whig party, would be but to divide and distract the sound national men of the South.

Where have we an ally in the North, outside of the Democratic organization? These allies have been true to us in the past. With a patriotic devotion to the union of the States, and a patriotic regard to the constitutional rights of the South, they have bared their bosoms to the ragings of the storm—they have stood unmoved, while malignity and fanaticism have poured their fiery torrents upon them. I take them to my heart as political brothers, and wear and cherish them there.

How stands the Democratic party? I have given you the resolution of the present members of Congress.

Listen to Ohio! Steeped as she has been in Free-Soilism; in State convention assembled, with the boldness of right—with the candor of manhood, they declare, on the 8th day of January last, as follows:

"1. *Resolved*, That slavery (being the creature of positive law, cannot exist without it) is a domestic institution, and that Congress has neither the power to legislate it into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.

"2. *Resolved*, That the right of the people of each particular State and Territory to establish their own constitution or form of government, to choose and regulate their own domestic institutions of every kind, and to legislate for themselves, is a fundamental principle of all free government; and that it is the self-same right to secure which our ancestors waged the war

of the Revolution—a right lying at the very foundation of all our free institutions, recognized in the Declaration of Independence, and established by the Constitution of the United States; and we hereby indorse and reaffirm this now disputed principle.”

Contrast this with the resolves of the Know Nothing convention at Cincinnati.

Listen to Indiana, as she, too, speaks in her Democratic State convention. She says:

“*Resolved*, That we approve the principles of the compromise measures of 1850, and their application, as embodied in the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and will faithfully maintain them.”

Hear the Democracy of New York, as they, too, in convention declare:

“*Resolved*, That the determination of Congress, avowed in the Kansas-Nebraska bill, to reject from the national councils the subject of slavery in the Territories, and to leave the people thereof free to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States, is one that accords with the sentiments of the Democracy of the State, and with the traditional course of legislation by Congress, which, under Democratic auspices, has gradually, in successive territorial bills, extended the domain of popular rights and limited the range of congressional action; and that we believe this disposition of the question will result most auspiciously to the peace of the Union and the cause of good government.”

All, everywhere, from Maine to Texas, speak the same language, declare the same principles, and rally under the same flag! Is not this party national? Contrast these resolves with the fact, that the Know Nothing party, but two years old, has managed, even in that short time, to be in favor of secrecy against secrecy, in favor of test oaths against test oaths—in some States for the Catholic test, in others against the Catholic test—on one side of the Union for the twelfth section, on the other side against the twelfth section; and in their late convention, at one time the southern chivalry bolt, at another the northern Free-Soilers bolt, and tell me if you can support such a party, even though Millard Fillmore is its candidate for the presidency!

As to the Black Republican party, it now has the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Encouraged by past successes, it has become insolently bold, and grasps with an eager hand for the reins of Government. If it succeeds, if it elects a President, and gets possession of both Houses of Congress, it will carry out its *infamous* circle of measures: the repeal of the fugitive slave law, the abolishment of slavery in the District of Columbia, interdict the inter-slave trade between the States, restore the Missouri restriction, and refuse to admit any more slave States! Who is it that does not know the Union would not survive an hour? Our danger is not from the Pope, not from foreigners, but is from the Abolitionists. What, then, is our first solemn, patriotic duty? It is that we should band together as one man. It is that we should each bring his former prejudices and lay them down upon the altar of our country—that we should leave the past to “bury its own dead,” and look to and fight alone for the preservation of the Constitution and the Union!

I have seen the Democracy come down from the North and up from the South, and gathering in solid column around the Constitution, declare that the rights of the South, the just equality of the States, the capacity of man for self-government, are their bonds of brotherhood; that they will protect that Constitution against all the assaults of all the *isms* in the land. While they

continue to occupy this proud position, I am v
 God, I believe that the Democratic is the
 which we can beat back this Abolition horde
 believe, I shall continue to act with them; and
 the victory is achieved, when our gallant old ship is again afloat in the sun-
 shine and upon quiet seas, I shall turn round to my Democratic brethren, and,
 if I have any unadjusted quarrels, I will settle them then.

And now, fellow-citizens, I submit if I have not redeemed my pledge, that
 I would set myself fairly, fully, frankly before you. I trust that my position
 will meet with your approval. If it should not, I have only to say that it has
 been taken after due deliberation—taken under a solemn sense of duty to you
 and the country. My opinions are my honest convictions, and if disapproved,
 I can retire from office. I cannot yield those convictions. I throw myself
 upon a generosity and kindness which took me by the hand when all obscure
 and unknown, and lifted me up to a seat in the Congress of the United States,
 and which, when slandered and abused in my last canvass, during my absence,
 sustained me with an emphatic indorsement. I submit it fearlessly, confidently
 to you, whether I shall return to my home under the frown of your condem-
 nation, or whether I will again be greeted with that plaudit ever so dear to a
 public man, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"

In any event, I am truly yours,

SAMUEL CARUTHERS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, February 28, 1856.

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